



# Friendship Service Center, Inc.

"Our work is love made visible"

Appropriation Committee Hearing

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## LOCATIONS

**Virginia C. Davis  
Friendship Center**  
241-249 Arch Street  
New Britain, CT 06051

*Tomasso Family  
Community Kitchen*

*Emergency  
Needs Ministry*

*Emergency  
Shelter*

*PATH Homeless  
Outreach*

*PEAK Housing  
Program*

*Transitional  
Living Program*

**Ellen Perkins  
Simpson Building**  
57 - 61 Arch Street  
New Britain, CT 06051

*Arch Street Housing*

**American Savings  
Foundation Building**  
85 Arch Street  
New Britain, CT 06051

*Agency Administration*

*Arch Street Housing*

*Beyond Shelter  
Connecticut*

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Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walter, Representative Ziobron and members of the Committee: Thank you for accepting my written testimony in lieu of my presence at your hearing on the Department of Housing budget. This letter addresses a crucial portion of the DOH budget. You might say it's all crucial. However, **the homelessness line item is particularly important because** it not only assists those experiencing homelessness but **it saves state dollars as well!** I urge you to consider this line item seriously.

- The current budget proposes preserving funding for these critical services. **Housing/Homeless Services line item: \$73.7 million in FY 18 and \$78.3 million in FY 19.** This money pays for services including outreach, emergency shelters and the Rental Assistance Program (RAP), essential services to get people housed and end homelessness.
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) continues to be the most effective housing model to assist people experiencing homeless. **PSH is proven to cut public services costs by as much as 70%.**
- As the Executive Director of an agency that has 21 units of project based PSH and 31 units of scattered site PSH, I know first-hand the value of this important model of housing.
- I wish you could be with me when someone who has been homeless for a very long time signs the lease and moves into their own apartment. Such was the case recently when a family, living in their car for many months – **four children a mom and a dad** – came to live in a three bedroom apartment at 85 Arch Street in New Britain. (Part of the Friendship Center's Arch Street Housing with the aforementioned 21 units). All the while living in the car, the mom continued working and the children remained in school. Using public bathroom to keep your children clean and ready for school is no easy feat but they accomplished it with a strength and determination I can only imagine. Since they have found housing, dad has found a job and this family is on the road to self-sufficiency.
- I urge you to keep the budget intact so the progress can continue and the cost of state resources can be held at bay.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ellen Perkins Simpson  
Executive Director